

# California Veterans Board



## Annual Report

July 2001 -- June 2002



**George G. Sinopoli, Chairperson**



**John Fitzke, Vice Chairperson**  
(July-December 2001, term ended March 2002)



**Dr. Edward M. Feldman, Vice Chairperson**  
(December 2001 – present)



**Jerry B. Basconcillo, Member**

**Leo P. Burke, Member**

**Judy H. Gaze, Member**

**Larry S. Lattman, Member**



**Pedro Carrillo, Member**  
(Resigned April 2002)

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# Executive Summary

## WHAT THIS REPORT COVERS

Typically, the California Veterans Board's Annual Report covers the calendar year. This annual report of 2002 will cover the past fiscal year (July 1, 2001--June 30, 2002). This Annual Report is organized to provide information about both the specific activities of the Board and the context within which those activities were undertaken.

Section	Topics Covered
Introduction	Provides a brief background of how the Board and its responsibilities have been developed since 1921. In a short space, it offers an explanation with reference to how the Board came to be.
Mission Statement	A usable statement of the Board's primary purpose.
Board Member Information	Provides a biographical sketch of those individuals who served as Board members during fiscal year 2002.
Board Structure; Policy & Administration Organization Chart	These sections discuss the relationship between the Board and the Department of Veterans Affairs for which it sets policy, and the varying mechanisms in place to energize that relationship.
Departmental Programs	This section details specific areas in which the majority of Board activity, relative to the Department of Veterans Affairs, took place. (Farm & Home Loans, Veterans Services, & Veterans Homes)
The Board and the Legislative Process	Explains how the Board seeks to participate in the statutory formation of veterans' public policy. Also provided is a chart recording the Boards support and oppositions to proposed bills.
The Board and the Appeal Process	This section indicates action to review Department of Veterans Affairs management decisions that individual veterans regard as adverse to both their interests and their rights.

## RECOGNITION

Work on behalf of veterans is a collaborative effort. The Board recognizes and appreciates the work done by the **California Legislature** on behalf of those citizens of California who have served our nation in uniform. The Board recognizes and greatly appreciates the support provided by the **California Department of Veterans Affairs and the Office of the Inspector General**. The Board also recognizes the very strong support veterans issues have received from **Governor Gray Davis** throughout his administration. During his tenure as Governor, he has signed many pieces of legislation benefiting California's veterans. The collaborative nature of veterans-related public policy making has been greatly invigorated during 2002. The California Veterans Board anticipates that this re-energized cooperation will be the starting point for its work in the years to come.

# Introduction

## HISTORY OF THE BOARD

The people of the State of California have a long and distinguished history of support for the men and women who have served the United States in military uniform. This support has, over time, manifested itself by the development of a significant California public policy segment devoted to veterans and issues of importance to them. The duties and responsibilities of the California Veterans Board, which are enumerated in the Military and Veterans Code, evolve as part of that public policy development.

At the transition from the 19th to the 20th century, the State of California became the responsible manager of the Veterans Home of California at Yountville, a facility providing retirement care for aged and disabled military veterans, established in 1884.

Following the armistice that ended World War I, California, like most other states, wanted to provide some sort of official appreciation for their service to those veterans returning from the war. In 1921, the Legislature established the Veterans Welfare Board to manage the programs enacted to give constructive form to that appreciation. By 1929, attention to veteran-related issues has grown sufficiently resulting in the establishment of a new department of state government to be known as the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. Together with the Veterans Welfare Board and a number of other boards, this Department managed veterans programs and policy issues until the end of World War II.

Following World War II in 1946, a governmental reorganization saw the establishment of the Department of Veterans Affairs and California Veterans Board as replacements for the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, the Veterans Welfare Board, and the lesser known boards. Statutory authorization for the California Veterans Board is found in Section 64 of the California Military and Veterans Code. Sections 65 through 73 of the Code establish the size of the Board and the requirements for service upon it.

## BOARD MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS

The California Veterans Board was established within the California Department of Veterans Affairs under the Statutes of 1946, and is governed by the California Military and Veterans Code. It is composed of seven members, appointed to non-concurrent four-year terms by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the Senate. The Governor will fill any vacancies for the un-expired portion of the terms in which they occur.

- All of the members must be veterans.
- One member shall be retired from the active or reserve forces of the United States military.
- One member shall have substantial training or professional expertise in mortgage lending and real estate.
- One member shall have substantial training or professional expertise in geriatrics, gerontology, or long-term care.
- One member shall be a resident of the California Veterans Homes.

## **BOARD POSITIONS**

The Board elects a Chairperson who then selects a Vice Chairperson. The Chairperson conducts monthly meetings and any Special Sessions that may be convened (In accordance with MVC Sections 71-73). The Board creates committees to advise the Board in specific areas of their jurisdiction.

## **BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Board takes into consideration budgetary constraints, veteran representation in the community, and appropriate meeting sites when convening meetings. Board meetings are open to all veterans, veterans' service organizations, members of the legislature and the general public.

The Board also participates in the legislative process by testifying in person or in writing to the Legislature on behalf of veterans on matters pertaining to the welfare of the veteran community of California. Individual Board members may be assigned liaison duties with major veterans organizations including The American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Jewish War Veterans, and AMVETS. The Board may attend other veteran's functions by invitation. Board members serve on the Board's Select Committees at the pleasure of the Chairperson. Section 86(a) of the California Military and Veterans Code provides that any veteran who applies for benefits may appeal any decision of the Department to the Board. The Board is the final level of administrative appeal.

The Board monitors veterans and dependents policy issues through Select Committees, whose Chairperson maintain contact with the Department staff and others. The Board determines the policy for all operations of the Department, including significant changes affecting all on-going programs, proposed programs, and long-range planning, such as the Farm and Home Loan program, veteran's claims and rights, the California veterans homes, and the Department's Strategic Plan.

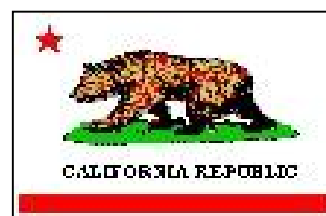


# CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD

## MISSION STATEMENT

**To determine policies for the California Department of Veterans Affairs; to hear and render decisions on veterans' appeals; to set the annual rate of interest on Cal-Vet farm and home loans; to ensure that the more than 2.6 million veterans residing in California and their dependents are treated fairly and are provided, upon request, all information available relating to the benefits authorized by state law, including quality veterans homes; to interface with California's veteran organizations; and to conduct all board business by**

**SERVING VETERANS TODAY.**



# Board Member Information

## **GEORGE G. SINOPOLI, CHAIRPERSON**

Governor Davis reappointed Mr. Sinopoli to the Board in March 2002. He is from Fresno and previously served as Chairman of the California Veterans Board under Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. Additionally, he served as State Commander and Executive Director of The American Legion. During World War II, Mr. Sinopoli served as an Army Air Corps Pilot. His term runs until January 15, 2006.

## **EDWARD FELDMAN, VICE CHAIRPERSON**

Dr. Feldman of Westlake Village is a highly decorated veteran, having served as a Naval Officer with the Marine Infantry during the Vietnam War. He currently serves as a physician in Thousand Oaks. Dr. Feldman was a founding member of the Hillcrest Home in Thousand Oaks, which serves as a retirement and semi-ambulatory care facility. He earned a bachelor of science degree from Columbia University and a doctorate of osteopathic medicine degree from the University of Health Sciences, Kansas City. His term expires January 15, 2005.

## **LEO P. BURKE**

Mr. Burke of Stockton was reappointed to the Board in June 2002. He began serving on the Board in 1985 and since then has served as Chairman seven times. In addition to his Board responsibilities, he serves as President of the Board of Directors of the Disabled American Veterans Charities of San Joaquin County, and Chairman of the San Joaquin Delta Community College Board. Prior to retirement, he served for many years as the Administrator of the Stockton Convention Center. Mr. Burke served in the U.S. Marine Corps, is a veteran of World War II and is past National Vice Commander for the American Legion. Currently he also is serving as the Chairperson for Governor Davis on the Commission for Veterans Homes, Vice Chairman of the National Legislation Commission for the American Legion and is a member of the USVA Advisory Committee for Cemeteries and Memorials. His current term on the Veterans Board runs until January 15, 2003.

## **JERRY B. BASCONCILLO**

Mr. Basconcillo, of Delano in Kern County, is a decorated veteran of the U.S. Army. He earned the Vietnam Service Medal, Bronze Star, Vietnam Commendation Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal. He served as Post Commander of The American Legion, Post 640, and also served on the 15<sup>th</sup> District Executive Committee. His term expires January 15, 2004.



### **PEDRO CARRILLO**

Mr. Carrillo, of Los Angeles, has served in the U.S. Army since 1986. He currently serves as sergeant and squad leader in the USAR, 63<sup>rd</sup> ARCOM in San Bernardino for the Army Reserve and American Legion Post 834. Since 1997, he has served as a Senior Field Deputy for Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard. From 1993-97, he was Community Relations Coordinator for the Los Angeles Alliance for a Drug Free Community. Mr. Carrillo earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from California State University, Los Angeles. He resigned from the Board for family reasons in April 2002.

### **JOHN L. FITZKE**

Mr. Fitzke, of Sacramento, has more than 24 years of military experience and is a retired U.S. Navy Master Chief (E-9). He serviced as Vice Chairmen from June to December 2001. Since 1996, he has served as Post Manager of VFW Post 4647. From 1995-96, he served as State Commander and Co-chair of the National Legislative Committee for the VFW. In addition to his involvement with the VFW, he is also a member of the Fleet Reserve Association. Mr. Fitzke earned a liberal arts degree from San Diego Community College. His term expired March 2002.

### **JUDY GAZE**

Ms. Gaze, of San Diego, is a retired Captain from the US Navy, having served from 1973–2000. She served as Director for the Quality of Life Services, Navy Region southwest. Ms. Gaze also served from 1993-1995 as Director of Military Family Housing in San Diego. She is currently a principal with SRA International, an information technology company. Ms. Gaze earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Northern Iowa and a Master of Business Administration degree from National University. Her term expires January 15, 2005.

### **LARRY LATTMAN**

Mr. Lattman is a resident of the California Veterans Home in Yountville. He is also the Chairman of the Allied Council at the Veterans Home. From 1998-2000, Mr. Lattman was with the Public Affairs/Outreach Office for the Veteran Home. He is member of the American Legion, VFW, Jewish War Veterans, Marine Corps League and AMVETS. His term expires January 15, 2004.



# Hometowns of California Veterans Board Members



# Board Structure Policy and Administration

## HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The people of California have created a veterans-related public policy area of remarkable dimension. That dimension was created through a vote of the people at the ballot box, a wide range of action taken by the Legislature, and a history of strong support from California's governors. In the vast statutory maze that provides the structure of California government, more than 2,300 citations are veteran specific. Many of those statutes deal with programs administered and/or managed by the California Department of Veterans Affairs. Section 72 of the California Military and Veterans Code provides that the California Veterans Board "... shall determine the policies for all operations of the Department."

Policymaking is a collaborative behavior. It requires the collection of information from many sources and from those with divergent points of view. Thoughtful review of the information is required before it can be appropriately distilled to a form usable in constructive discussion. Once these steps have been taken, consensus among the Board members must be reached on which items merit the status of policy items and which are merely informational or instructive.

The current Board membership believes that this collaborative process has been the norm rather than the exception for the past half-century. It recognizes, however, that the addition of clarifying language to Section 84 of the Code has improved the process by which policy for the Department of Veterans Affairs is made. These improvements were added through Senate Bill 1470, Chapter 1145, Statutes of 1996.

The Department of Veterans Affairs, under provisions of Section 70 of the Military and Veterans Code, is charged with administration and management of the specified programs within its purview, and under Section 74 of the Code, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is the responsible executive in the management and operation of those programs. Programs are generally more viable than the guiding principles or plans of action that are the justification for them. It is equally true that the 1,500+ full-time employees of the Department can be seen performing their duties more easily than seven private citizens (Board members) working part time and without salary. The Board Member's expenses are reimbursed and a \$100 per diem is authorized under Section 11564.5 of the Government Code. Review of this report will substantiate the realities that the California Veterans Board is more than a policy-making body. Likewise, it would be an error to believe that the 12 public meetings scheduled by the Board in any given year constitute its entire workload.

## HOW DOES THE BOARD ATTEND TO POLICY?

During this reporting fiscal year, members participated in many other meetings related to their work on the California Veterans Board. They also participated in 24 separate appeals filed by veterans disputing judgments made by the Department of Veterans Affairs in the discharge of its program administration responsibilities. Additionally, each Board member participated in a number of veterans functions that they did not believe met the standard of official business. It should be noted that the members of the Board are widely recognized throughout California as key players in the veterans public policy arena. (Detailed chart of appeals attached within).

# Structure and Process

The Board's policy-making responsibility is an integral part of how the Department of Veterans Affairs manages the services it also provides to California's veterans the establishment of a concise and orderly process by the Board to exercise that responsibility is also fundamental.

To achieve this orderly process, the Board has created two mechanisms. The first is a select committee structure through which topic-specific review and individual expertise or interest of a Board member can be effectively utilized to gather and prioritize information so that action items can be identified. Once identified, the select committee members bring items to the public meeting of the full Board for additional review and whatever response the full membership sees as appropriate. The second element in the Board's structure is the Policy Book. As the name indicates, this is the official statement of the "...guiding principles..." promulgated by the Board in discharge of its duties as described in Section 72 of the Military and Veterans Code.

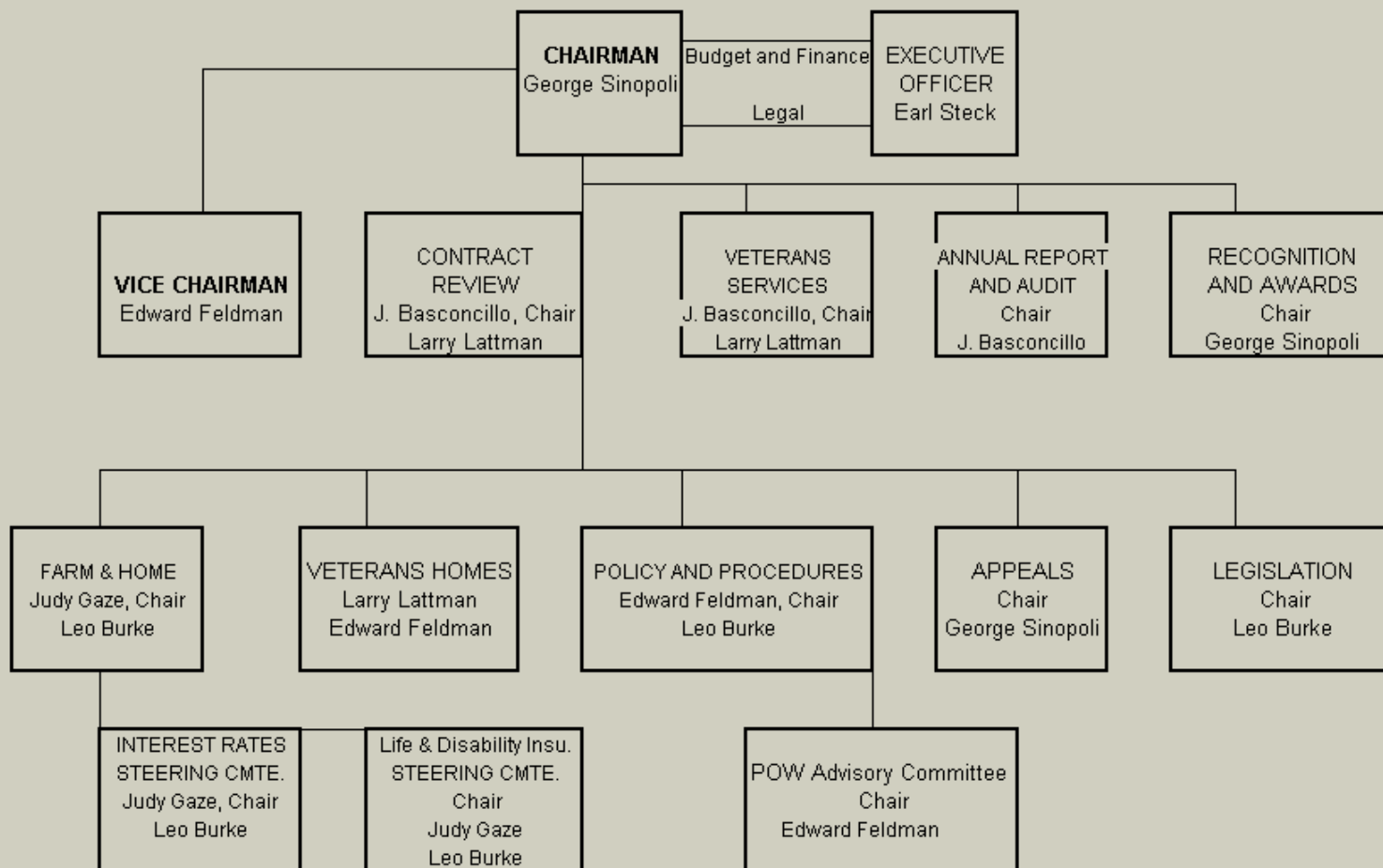
The Select Committees are: Annual Report and Audit, Appeals, Contract Review, Farm and Home, Legislation, Policy and Procedures, Recognition and Awards, Veterans Homes, and Veterans Services. Assignments to these nine Select Committees encompass the majority of work done by individual members in the discharge of their Board responsibilities. The organization chart of the Select Committees is enclosed. Details of each committee are included in the minutes of the Board meeting found on the Boards web site. [www.cdva.ca.gov/board](http://www.cdva.ca.gov/board). The key accomplishments of these committees include:

1. The California Veterans Board Annual Report
2. Several CDVA Contract Reviews/Audits
3. Contract review for new lower interest rates for CDVA Farm and Home Loans
4. Actively involved in review of Request for Proposals for Life and Disability Program
5. Reviewed and stated official position on over 70 legislative bills (chart enclosed)
6. Officially recognized numerous Veteran Organizations and individual veterans supporters
7. Review reports on and annual visits to each of the three California Veterans Homes
8. Monthly updates on the Veterans Services Programs
9. The California Veterans Board Policy Book is currently being updated

The 2001 legislative session provided reinforcing language with respect to the role and support of the Board. Senate Bill 164, sponsored by Senator Johannessen, provided for a full time Executive Officer to tend the day-to-day business of the Board. This bill also required the Board to provide an annual report to the Legislature by October 1 of each year.

# CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD

## 2002 Organization Chart & Select Committee Assignments AS OF JUNE, 2002



Revised to comply with current Military and Veterans Code.

Board members shall elect Board Chairman who shall hold office as chairperson at the pleasure of the Board . (Sen Bill # 164-Aug 2001)

Board Chairman shall appoint a Vice Chairman and Select Committees Chairs.

Revised June 5, 2002

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# Departmental Programs

## FARM AND HOME LOAN PROGRAM

The aggressive effort to make the Farm and Home loan program, managed by the California Department of Veterans Affairs, the loan of choice among home-buying veterans, continued strong throughout 2001 and 2002. A number of moves designed to improve the financial attractiveness and stability of the loan program were undertaken. Over the course of the past year improvements authorized by the Board began to show results. Bond ratings, for the Farm and Home loan program were upgraded and steps are underway to use additional unrestricted proceeds for loans targeted at California's newest generation of veterans. As expected, the sharp increase in volume resulted in an increase in processing time. The Board worked with veterans and Department staff to facilitate the issues, which included the loan processing time, of concern to the veteran homebuyer. The decline of outside interest rates beginning in the Fall of 2000 and continuing through the Spring of 2001, resulted in a decline in the application rate. This decline allowed the division to eliminate the backlog created by the sharp increase in loans during 2000, and has allowed new loan applications to be processed in the newly mandated 45 days, or less. Cal Vet interest rates have been reduced and current marketing efforts have been initiated to build the volume back up to previous levels. An ongoing concern of the Board and the Department is the soundness of the insurance programs available to contract holders. Again following Governor Gray Davis' lead, the Board continues to identify possible avenues for the restoration of a reasonably priced program of coverage. There has been a definite improvement in this area and work toward this result is expected to continue throughout 2002 and the coming years.

## VETERANS SERVICES

A wide range of issues came to the Board in this area during the 2001 and 2002 reporting period. The appropriate placement of USDVA medical facilities in Northern California continued to be an area of focus for Department staff, Board members and veterans at large. The Chief of Veterans Services also understands the importance of federal funding issues and assists the Board in bringing the Davis Administration's policy of benefit restoration for veterans to the forefront. The Board also is encouraging cooperative relationships with community-based organizations that deal with the issues of homelessness and substance dependency.

A welcome addition to this division was the establishment of the Homeless Veterans Advocate position effective July 1, 2001. Governor Davis signed legislation allocating \$1.5 million for outreach, screening, and testing for Hepatitis C, and as a result the Division is working closely with the Department of Health Services and has established a Hepatitis C Coordinator position.

The management of the \$3.5 million in County subvention payments to California's 56 County Veterans Services Offices has proven that the division is very effective. The Board is also pleased with the division's Veterans License Plate Program. Over 14,000 veteran plates are now on California vehicles. This program has provided over \$1.6 million in support to local veterans programs since its inception. During this report period 12,982 Tuition Fee Waivers were granted for college students of California Disabled Veterans. Unfortunately 790 other requests were denied, due to current legislative restrictions.

## VETERANS HOMES AND FUTURE VETERANS HOME SITES

The three veterans homes in Barstow, Chula Vista and Yountville continue to provide comfortable living for our aged and disabled California veterans. The Board is pleased to note that the continuity has been achieved with the appointments of three qualified administrators who have identified the problem areas at their respective homes and placed proper personnel in strategic positions. With the Barstow home being re-certified by both CMS and USDVA the outlook is for maximum residency in the very near future. A welcome addition to the Department was the appointment of George Andries, Jr. as the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Homes. His efforts in quality improvements and revising the fiscal management programs are noteworthy.

The Governor's Commission on Future Veterans Homes sites is currently at work to recommend future sites and has the full support of the Board. Outside the time frame of this report but worthy of reporting, the Legislature passed and Governor Davis signed four historic bills on August 14<sup>th</sup>. 2002. Those bills will authorize the building five new veterans homes in California, including West Los Angeles, Lancaster, Saticoy, Fresno County and Shasta County. Those bills included, AB 2559 (Wesson), AB 2953 (Wiggins), SB 1234 (Johannessen) and SB 1773 (Chesbro). Also in July, the California Veterans Home in Chula Vista was fully licensed and certified.

A major concern of the Board is the establishment of Alzheimer and Dementia treatment facilities within the veterans' homes, and will continue to strive to achieve the formation of such facilities for the current homes as well as the future homes.

## The Board and the Legislative Process

Although its principle responsibility is as the policy making body for the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Board has, over the years, developed into an active informational conduit for the veterans community. The Board informs that community of the policy aims of the gubernatorial administration of which it is largely a part, as well as those, which it affixes for the Department of Veterans Affairs. It also carries back to them the attitudes, concerns, and positions of California veterans encountered in the travels of the Board and its individual members. That naturally existing dialogue gives rise to the Board's interest in the legislative process as it relates to veterans issues.

The Select Committee on Legislation monitors veterans-related legislation as well as more broadly defined legislation that might be of interest to California's veterans. From time to time, and after much discussion among themselves, the Board may take a public position on certain legislative measures.

During the past fiscal year, the Board acted on 50 Bills sponsored by various Senators and Assemblymen. In the chart below we have identified the sponsor for each Bill and the Board's position to these Bills.

<b>BILL</b>	<b>SPONSOR</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>CVB POSITION</b>
AB 34	Runner	Veterans Homes: <i>nursing care (amended June 14, 2001)</i>	Supported
AB 172	Reyes	Scholarships ( <i>amended Feb 20, 2002</i> )	Supported
AB 494	Cardoza	Veterans homes Commission (amended) extended the time fro the Commission to Jan 2003 and required report by Oct 2001.	Supported
AB 527	Kehoe	Special interest licenses plates for veterans – reduced fee from \$35 to \$10	Supported
AB 612	Mountjoy	Overseas Ballots: <i>military voters</i>	Supported
AB 737	Oropeza	Permitted specific competitive bidding for Disabled veterans business enterprises	Supported
AB 747	Chavez	Established Governors Commission on Homeless Veterans	Supported
AB 941	Florez	Disabled veterans business enterprises required DCVA to appoint advocate	Supported
AB 979	Cedillo	Classified Employee: <i>call to Active military duty</i>	Supported
AB 1060	Negrete/McLeod	Department of Veterans Affairs-collaborate with Health Services on homeless	Supported
AB 1127	Corbett	Adjustment in property taxation for disabled veterans	Supported
AB 1347	Pescetti	Established Dementia caregiver training for certified nursing assistant staff	Supported
AB 1433	Horton	Military Service: <i>benefits</i>	Supported
AB 1572	Briggs	Drivers license; identification cards; selective service registration for males	Supported
AB 1593	Wyman	Redefined disabled veterans in Vehicle Code—from 100% to 50%	Supported
AB 1798	Chavez	Public records: DD214	Supported



<b>BILL</b>	<b>SPONSOR</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>CVB POSITION</b>
AB 1799	Chavez	Veterans Service Offices	Supported
AB 1800	Kehoe	Motor Vehicles: <i>person with disabilities</i>	Supported
AB 1841	Hollingsworth	Public Postsecondary Education: <i>resident classification</i>	Supported
AB 1850	Nakano	Military Service: <i>health care benefits</i>	Supported
AB 1862	Wyman	Military Service: <i>benefits</i>	Supported
AB 1965	Bogh / Chavez	Postsecondary Education: <i>Medal of Honor recipients (amended April 10, 2002)</i>	Supported
AB 2089	Aanestad	Veterans' Home of California-Shasta County	Supported
AB 2428	Correa	Veterans: <i>benefits (amended April 1, 2002)</i>	Supported
AB 2508	Dickerson	Remembrance Memorial Korean War Vets ( <i>amended May 2, 2002</i> )	Supported
AB 2559	Wesson	Veterans' Home of California: <i>does not prohibit simultaneous construction of Veterans Homes</i>	Supported
AB 2633	J. Campbell	Postsecondary Education: <i>veterans residence</i>	Supported
AB2649	Wyland	Military leave-employee rights for NG & Res. members	Supported
AB 2670	Wyman	Income Taxes: <i>military exemption</i>	Supported
AB 2953	Wiggins	Veterans' Homes: <i>renovation- VHC, Yountville &amp; Barstow</i>	Supported
ACR 130	Havice	Gold Star Mothers Week	Supported
ACR 133	Havice	Merchant Marine Remembrance Week	Supported
ACR 135	Strickland	Ventura County Vietnam Memorial Highway	Supported
ACR 187	Nakano	Fall of Bataan ( <i>amended April 11, 2002</i> )	Supported
ARC 221	Nakano	Japanese-American WWII Veterans	Supported
ACR 223	Bogh/Chavez	California Medal of Honor Recipients Benefits	Supported

<b>BILL</b>	<b>SPONSOR</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>CVB POSITION</b>
AJR 34	Hollingsworth	Disabled Military Retirees: <i>tied to US Congress; eliminates retirement dis. penalty</i>	Supported
AJR 50	Dickerson	Veterans Benefits/CVSO partnership with USDVA Claims	Supported
<b>SENATE</b>			Supported
SB 2	Knight	Veteran's homes: nursing care (amended) appropriate moneys for veterans home fund in support of City of Lancaster.	Supported
SB 4	Johannessen	Veterans' Home of California – extended Governors Commission on site selection for future homes.	Supported
SB 86	Oller	Veterans: memorial district majority of members required to be veterans	Supported
SB 164	Johannessen	California Veterans Board required to report annually to the Legislature, CDVA required to budget; the Board authorized to appoint full time Executive Officer	Supported
SB 182	Johannessen	Farm and Home purchases: life and disability insurance reserves maintained	Supported
SB 478	Johannessen	Veterans Homes of California – administrator appointed by Governor, recommended by Secretary of Department of Veterans Affairs	Supported
SB 569	Morrow	State Employment: <i>military leave</i>	Supported
SB 597	Chesbro	Veterans Home of California: fees and charges, shall not be greater than 40% of income or \$1,200 per month, whichever is less	Supported
SB 781	Knight	Veterans Homes—authorize Department to accept applications for residence at new homes beginning the start date of construction of a new home.	Supported
SB 844	Chesbro	Vet Homes of Cal. Renovation Yountville	Supported
SB 933	Margett	Veterans home: eligibility (amended) priority to Medal of Honor and wives	Supported
SB 959	Knight	Veterans Homes of California: administration (to be amended)	Withheld
SB 1033	Knight	Bid Preferences: <i>disabled veterans business enterprises (amended June 01)</i>	Supported
SB 1045	Polanco	Public Employment and Contracting ( <i>amended June 27, 2001</i> )	Supported
SB 1142	Knight	Veterans home; permits widows of Medal of Honor to be residence at homes.	Supported
SB 1234	Johannessen	Veterans Homes: <i>tied to Bond Act</i>	Supported
SB 1251	Johannessen	Military and Veteran Code Farm & Home Purchase Program: <i>obsolete refer.</i>	Supported
SB 1276	Speier	Selective Service Registration ( <i>amended April 15, 2002</i> )	Supported

<b>BILL</b>	<b>SPONSOR</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>CVB POSITION</b>
SB 1281	Haynes	Veteran's Homes: <i>accounting for charges (amended Mar 12, 2002; quarterly statement of excess costs (As written admin support cannot provide without addition resources).</i>	OPPOSED 3/9/02
SB 1284	Battin	Military Reserves: <i>Operation Enduring Freedom; amended</i>	Supported
SB 1309	Johannessen	Veterans Farm and Home Purchases: <i>life and disability insurance requirements (As written was financially unaffordable. Would require increase cost of insurance to each veteran).</i>	OPPOSED 3/9/02
SB 1321	Haynes	Veteran's Home: <i>Morale, Welfare, &amp; Recreation Fund (amended March 02)</i>	OPPOSED 3/9/02
SB 1455	Johannessen	Northern California Veterans Cemetery	Supported
SB 1457	McPherson	Central Coast Veterans Cemetery: <i>tied to Ft Ord</i>	Supported
SB 1462	Morrow	Personal Income Taxes: <i>credits; surviving spouses of Military veterans</i>	Supported
SB 1469	Johannessen	Property tax: <i>veteran's organization exemptions</i>	Supported
SB 1470	Johannessen	Cal. National Guard Military Museum	Supported
SB 1535	Knight	Selective Service Act: <i>registration: high school (amended April 16, 2002)</i>	Supported
SB 1551	Battin	State Militia: <i>armories</i>	Reviewing
SB 1773	Chesbro	Veterans Home of California: <i>funding for renovation of VHC, Younville</i>	Supported
SB 1776	Poochigian	Military Services: <i>benefits, Cal NG who are state employee to get pay differential compensation if active duty for OPN Enduring Freedom</i>	Supported
SB 1815	McPherson	California Veterans Cemetery at Fort Ord	Supported
SB 1893	Johannessen	Veterans' Farm and Home Purchase Program: <i>max loan of from \$250,000 to current Fannie Mae max limit; separate rates for active duty</i>	Supported
SCR 56	Johannessen	POW Recognitions Day: <i>(amended) Designate POW Recognition. Day</i>	Supported
	<b>US Senators</b>	<b>US CONGRESS</b>	
US SB 2640	<b>Boxer</b>	Support for Veterans at Federal VA Facilities with prescriptions from civilian doctors	Supported
HR 959	<b>Kleczka, Wisconsin</b>	Amend Internal Revenue Code 1986 to allow veterans mortgages or revenue bond financing	Supported

# The Board and the Appeal Process

Section 86 of the Military and Veterans Code provides that the Board serves as an appellate body for any veteran who believes that a decision by the Department of Veterans Affairs with respect to that veteran has affected them adversely. When an appeal is received, it is assigned to one of the seven at-large members for review. The assigned member is responsible for reviewing all file material, conducting an initial hearing when one is requested, and making a presentation to the full Board. The most frequent topics for appeal during this reporting period were veterans Home admission issues, College Fee Waiver issues, and various Farm and Home Loan Program issues. The Board also conducts formal hearings at which time the entire Board sits as a jury and all sides have legal counsel.

CATEGORY	TYPE OF HEARING(S)	BOARD DECISION
Disability Insurance	➤ 1 = review of records	Denied, unsupported claim
College Education Fee Waiver	➤ 1 = formal	4 Denied, outside the Boards authority
	➤ 2 = review of records	1 Dismissed due to lack of documents
	➤ 2 = informal	
Reimbursement of College Funds	➤ 1 = review of records	Denied, outside the Boards authority
Farm and Home Loan	➤ 2 = review of records	<b>1 approved</b> ; 2 denied; 1 dismissed; 1 withdrawn;
	➤ 3 = informal	1 pending legal action
	➤ 1 = formal	
Federal VA Payments	➤ 1 = reviewed	Dismissed: outside CVB authority
Home Bid Denial	➤ 1 = review of records	Dismissed: outside CVB authority
Transfer to Chula Vista Veterans' Home	➤ 1 = review of records	Denied, beyond the resources of the Home
Eviction from Chula Vista Veteran's Home	➤ 1 = formal	Denied, not compatibles for home residence
Denial of Admission: Chula Vista	➤ 1 = formal	Postponed
Denial of Admission: Yountville	➤ 3 = review of records ➤ 5 = informal	<b>1 approved</b> ; 5 denied; 2 withdrawn

*Locations for FORMAL Hearing are to be scheduled close to the Appellants home.*

## **The Board and The Veteran Community**

As specified in Sections 65 and 66 of the Military and Veterans Code, those individuals appointed by the Governor to serve on the California Veterans Board are veterans themselves. These men and women are people who represent the geographic and social diversity of California and they are generally individuals who have a demonstrated history of service to the veteran community prior to their appointment to the Board. It is in fact the members' stature in the veteran community that gives the Board both its credibility and its access to that community. As gubernatorial appointees, Board members have the twin responsibilities of communicating the Governor's veteran-related public policy positions to the veterans who live in California and returning to the Governor those concerns and viewpoints of the veteran constituency that have been communicated to the Board.

To adequately meet the tasks described above, the Board feels very strongly that it should meet in locations throughout the entire state and resist any temptation to meet principally in Sacramento. Furthermore, Board members believe that meeting in rural communities and in those smaller urban communities that abound in California is every bit as important as meeting in large cities like Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco. The Board has worked to implement a pattern for meeting locations that provides for this kind of geographic diversity.

Always critical to an accurate understanding of the veteran community in California is a well-developed working relationship with the veterans' service organizations. These groups, including The American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), American Veterans (AMVETS), Jewish War Veterans (JWV), Fleet Reserve Association, Reserve Officers Association (ROA), Vietnam Veterans and the American G.I. Forum, among others, represent more than a half million California veterans. They are platforms for community service in virtually every city and town in our state. The relationship between the Board and the service organizations has been excellent during this reporting period. The Board members wish to express their deep gratitude to the organizations for the cooperation extended to it on a wide range of topics during this reporting year. Board members continue to seek out similar levels of interaction with the 90% of the California veterans who may not be affiliated with any organized veterans group.

# **Summary of Monthly Board Meetings**

## **July 13, 2001 Georgetown, California**

The California Veterans Board meeting on July 13 was held at the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Growlersburg Post # 9241 in Georgetown, CA. Minutes of June 15 & 16 meeting were approved. Inspector General Jerry Hansen reported the status of the Barstow Home and the de-certification situation and the re-certification process, which is under way. Board members reported traveling over 3,000 miles in support of veteran activities in California during June. The appeals backlog of 25 has been completed and no new appeals pending. 55 new home loans were funded in June as a result of the lower interest rate for Cal Vet Loans. Ron Brand reported on the progress of the Governor's Commission on Veterans Homes, with trips to Redding and several cities in the Central Valley. The Board passed motions in support of three legislative bills, SB 1815 (McPherson) master plan for Monterey County Veterans Cemetery; SB 2640 (Boxer) support veterans using VA facilities for prescriptions from civilian doctors; HR 959 (Klecicka, Wisconsin), amend Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow younger veterans to get mortgage revenue bond financing. Board passed resolution regarding workers compensation coverage for volunteers at the California Veterans Homes.

## **August 10-11, 2001 Newport Beach, California**

The California Veterans Board meeting in August 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> was held at The American Legion Post # 291 in Newport Beach. Minutes of July 13 meeting were approved. Three new appeals were assigned. California Veterans homes have 1,502 residents, and when Barstow is re-certified, more rooms will be available. The Farm and Home Division reported that eleven companies have expressed interest in bidding for the Life and Disability Insurance Program. Governor Davis signed SB 1256 (Polanco) allocating \$1.5 million for Hepatitis C Program; half of which will be directed to support veterans. Gary Crossland is the new Veterans Service Hepatitis C Coordinator. In addition to this program, two other requests for positions to support veterans programs are forthcoming including; Disabled Vets Business Enterprise Advocate and Homeless Veterans Advocate. New Board Policy will be submitted soon on the new programs in Veterans Services, including Benefit Awareness Program, Veterans License Plate Program, and Homeless Veterans Outreach Program.

## **Sept 14-15, 2001 Delano, California**

The California Veterans Board meetings on September 14 & 15 were held at The American Legion, Merle Reed Post # 124 in Delano. 40 Veterans attended the two-day meetings. Mayor Art Armendariz welcomed the Board to the city and thanked them for holding a meeting there. Chairman Sinopoli introduced the newest Board Member, Dr. Ed Feldman from Westlake Village and the Board's new Executive Officer Earl Steck. Governor Davis also appointed two other Board members, Judy Gaze (San Diego) and Larry Lattman (resident at CVH-Yountville). They will be at the next meeting. Interim Secretary Thiesen reported on the excellent community efforts across the state with the Stand-Down Programs. The lower interest rates for Cal Vet Home loans have increased business. The three are now Revenue bonds 6%, GO bonds 6.25% and Unrestricted at 6.5%.

The Veterans Education Fee Waiver Program granted 6,700 grants for college bound students and more are expected. Five appeals were discussed, three were assigned, one denied and one delayed pending additional information. The Board voted to support twenty-seven legislative bills (those bills are included in the Legislative Chart attached in this report).

### **October 12-13, 2001 Eureka, California**

The California Veterans Board meetings October 12 & 13 were held at Red Lyon Hotel, Eureka. 16 veterans attended the two meetings. Eight appeals were heard, three were newly assigned, 2 pending additional information, 1 withdrawn, 1 denied, and 1 appeal granted a cash settlement to the veteran. Board approved the Fire and Hazard Insurance Program. Board directed letter to Health Service Department requesting a meeting with Dr. Feldman (Board Member) to clarify the concerns with CVH Barstow's re-certification. Interim Secretary Thiesen reported the Blue Ribbon Commission on Future Home Sites would meet next week to present its report on future home site recommendations. The Farm and Home Division has a new computer system to allow loan remittance to be made quicker. Another program is in the process to make loans applications electronically possible. Jerry Hansen (IG) reported on his efforts to assist Barstow with re-certification.

### **November 16-17, 2001 Fresno, California**

The California Veterans Board meeting on November 16 & 17 were held at Memorial Building Legion of Valor Hall in Fresno. 40 Veterans attended the two-day meetings. Appeals: Eight appeals were heard, three were new appeals, 1 was held pending additional documentation, two were denied and one requested formal hearing next month. New Business: Contract Review on RFP on food service for Yountville Home motion approved request. Review of Governor's Executive Order D-49-01 reduction in state spending...resulted in review of Board spending and reduction in meetings for next CY. Unfinished Business included review of Dept of Health Service and Barstow certification process. Letter to be sent to Chief of DHS for meeting to discuss details of process.

### **December 7-8, 2001 Yountville, California**

The December 7 & 8 meetings were held at the California Veterans Home in Yountville. 80 Veterans attended the two meetings. Board approved minutes for November 2001 meeting in Fresno. Five appeals were addressed, 2 were denied, 2 postponed pending additional information and 1 formal hearing was dismissed. NEW BUSINESS: Election was unanimous for George Sinopoli to continue to serve as Chairperson of the California Veterans Board. The Board attended the Homes Memorial Recognition of Pearl Harbor Day at the Post Chapel.

***In Support of Governor Davis' executive order on cut backs and budget restrictions, the California Veterans Board did not hold meetings in January 2002.***



## **February 1-2, 2002 Barstow, California**

The Board met at the California Veterans Home in Barstow where 79 veterans attended the two meetings. New Business Items: Governor's Proposed 2002-2003 FY Budget Impact on CDVA—Briefed by John Hanretty / Jack Kirwan. No Impact on CDVA. Renewal of Disaster Indemnity Program; Motion passed to allow sub-committee to approve after briefed & before next CVB meeting. California Veterans Home--Barstow & Chula Vista updates by Deputy Sect. Andries. Five Motions including; Approval of minutes as corrected for December 7-8, 2001 meeting in Yountville. Approved to support Sub-Committee recommendation on Farm and Home renewal of Disaster Indemnity Programs. Approval to support Letter to Assembly Member Sally Havice. Approval to support letter for Senate Bill 1234 (Johannessen). Two appeals were addressed both with action to follow at next meeting.

## **March 8-9, 2002 Chula Vista, California**

The Board met at the California Veterans Home in Chula Vista where 125 veterans attended the two meetings. New Business/Agenda Items: Review of Unreimbursed cost of care discussion. Secretary Thiesen volunteered to review the whole procedure and report back to the CVB on how improvements would be made in the administrative process. Report will be provided in less than 90 days. Motions Passed By CVB Vote: Approval of minutes February 2002 meeting in Barstow, Ca. Hold support for further review on AB 1799. Opposed support for SB 1281. Opposed support for SB 1309. Approval to support Assembly Bills: 1850, 1862, 2089, 2090, and Senate Bills: 1234, 1276, 1457, 1469, and 1773. Approval to support AB 1841 Approval to change CVB Meeting from April 12-13 to meeting date in Sacramento Area for April 19-20. Letters of support were sent for each bill. Appeals: Three appeals were heard, 2 admittance to Vet homes denied due to lack of support available and one new case assigned.

## **April 12-13, 2002 Sacramento, California**

The Board met at VFW Post # 4647 in Antelope where 39 veterans attended the two-day meetings. Approval of minutes, as amended for March 2002 meeting in Chula Vista, Ca Appeal **Approved** for Rose, Gene & Ada to move into CVH-Yountville. Unfinished Business Items: Review of Unreimbursed cost of care, Draft Letter presented. Secretary Thiesen will report back to the CVB on how improvements will be made in the administrative process. Update report will be provided at next meeting. NEW BUSINESS: 1. Update on "Life and Disability Insurance, Request For Proposal" On track, Public Hearing was held on Friday April 19. Update at May meeting. Select Committee actions: CVB Policy and Procedure Committee--Board will do a complete review of all policies. Executive Officer to send out letter of coordination. Independent legal counsel will be requested from the Attorney Generals Office for CVB. (XO send letter). CDVA Legal Office requested to review of all Codes, Regulations, & Laws that effect CDVA/CVB. That data will enable CVB to develop policies that are supported by those authority documents. The Board will support efforts with the Oral History Program at VHC-Yountville with high school students writing interviews. (Ed and Larry will coordinate).

## **May 17-18, 2002**

### **South Lake Tahoe, California**

The Board met at Senior Center, South Lake Tahoe where 18 veterans attended the two meetings. Motions Passed by CVB vote: Approval of minutes, as amended for April 2002 meeting in Antelope. Approval of minutes of Public Hearing on April 19 in Sacramento. Acceptance of withdrawal of Appeal from Giles, Alfred, (Denial to CVH-Yountville). Vote of support for Senate Bills: SB 844; SB 1033; SB 1284; SB 1455; SB 1462; SB 1535; SB 1776; and SB 1893, Letters of support sent out for each. Vote of support for Assembly Bills: AB 172; AB 979; AB 1433; AB 1798; AB 2559; AB 2633; AB 2670; Vote of support for ACR 135; ACR 187; Vote of support for AJR 34. Holding vote for next CVB Meeting to review details on SB/AB bills, including: AB34, AB 612, AB 748, AB 1965, AB 2323, AB 2428, AB 2508, AND SB 2, SB 1045, SB 1235, SB 1297, SB 1299.

New Business: 1. Update on "Life and Disability Insurance" George Flores reported "On track," Public Hearing held on Friday April 19. Update at next meeting. 2. Attorney Fees in the CalVet Loan Contract. Joe Maguire reported changing contract wording to prevent this action in the future. 3. Select Committee actions: CVB Policy and Procedure Committee--Board will continue reviewing all policies. Executive Officer to send out letter of coordination. Independent Legal counsel letter of request sent out for CVB. CDVA Legal Office requested to review of all Codes, Regulations, & Laws that effect CDVA/CVB. This will enable CVB to develop policies that are supported by those authority documents. (Joe Maguire and XO coordinate). Support the Oral History Program at VHC-Yountville with High School Students writing interviews. (Ed and Larry will continue to coordinate).

***NO MEETING WAS HELD IN JUNE 2002 Due to Fiscal Cut Backs and Other Veterans Organization Activities throughout the State. May was the last of the Regular Monthly Meetings for FY 2001-2002.***

## **July 12-13, 2002**

### **Thousand Oaks, California**

The July 12 & 13 meetings were held at the Elks Lodge in Thousand Oaks. 21 veterans attended the two day meetings. Motions Passed By CVB Vote & Other Key Actions: Approval of minutes for May 2002 meeting in South Lake Tahoe, Ca. Presentation of Formal Appeal by Donald Lake for denial of admittance to Vet Home in Chula Vista—(decision is under submission-letter to be sent this month). Four new appeals assigned: 1) Formal Appeal of Ed Fee Waiver. 2) (Ed Fee Waiver-Review of Records 3) Ed Fee Waiver- Informal Appeal 4) Farm and Home Loan issue- Informal Appeal). Vote of support for amendments to bills: SB 1234- Johannessen; SB 1773 Chesbro; AB 2559- Wesson; and AB 2953 Wiggins. (Supporting Bills for new Vet. Homes). Unfinished Business/Agenda Items: Review of Unreimbursed cost of care presented. (Joe Maguire). Update on CVB Policy book—Work session being coordinated for Sept. in Sacramento. (Ed Feldman & George Sinopoli) Review of Letter from Attorney General's Office for Independent Counsel. (Joe Maguire & Jerry Hansen) New Business: 1. Introduced new board member Leo Burke. 2. Update on "Life and Disability Insurance" George Flores reported "On track," Update at next meeting. 3. Select Committee actions: Annual Report draft handed out for Board review and input (Jerry Basconcillo). Department requested to update the Board on "Balanced Score Card Report Status at next meeting. John Hanretty presented department's projected Budget.

## Map of Meeting Locations



## **Summary of Activities**

### **July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002**

As indicated in the month-to-month overview of board activities it is quite evident that the California Veterans Board makes every attempt to meet in various parts of the state. Meetings took place as far north as Redding and as far south as San Diego. It is the desire of the Board to go where the customers are in order to give them a chance to appear before the Board.

In July 2001, three positions were unfilled on the California Veterans Board. On September 12, 2001, Governor Gray Davis appointed three new members to the California Veterans Board. The Board consisted of Chairperson George Sinopoli (Fresno), Vice Chairperson John Fitzke (Citrus Heights), Board Members Jerry Basconcillo (Delano), and Pedro Carrillo (Los Angeles). The three new Board members included; Edward Feldman (Westlake Village), a medical doctor; Judy Gaze (San Diego), a housing and real estate expert; and Larry Lattman, a resident from the Veterans Home of California in Yountville and the President of the CVH-Yountville Allied Council. In April 2002, Pedro Carrillo resigned due to family reasons. Governor Davis replaced Mr. Carrillo with Leo Burke, a previous Board member from Stockton. In March John Fitzke's term expired and that position remains vacant as of this report.

In April 2001, the Board's Executive Officer transferred to another position within the Department thereby leaving the position vacant. A temporary Executive Officer was assigned to help with the clerical support from within the Department. In August 2001 the Governor made that position Exempt and Earl Steck was appointed as the full time Executive Officer. Since that time, the operations, coordination and liaison efforts between the Board, Department, Legislature and the community have improved greatly. With a new team in place, the Board has begun several initiatives, including; a complete review and revision of the Board Policy Manual, an oversight management reports program (Balanced Score Card Reports) by the Department, and new detailed monthly updates by the Divisions within the Department. The Board has also required more detailed monthly reporting on the management of the Veterans Homes Division and the fiscal management systems in place at each of the homes.

The Board reviews Department denials for veterans who have exhausted departmental procedures and then file appeals to the Board. These appeals have been heard monthly in locations throughout the state. During this report period the Board processed 24 appeals. (See attached map of meeting locations & appeal chart for details.) The format followed in a formal appeal was changed from that of a courtroom atmosphere to one where the veteran is permitted to speak freely. This has proven to be beneficial since most veterans filing appeals cannot afford legal counsel. During the last two fiscal years the number of veterans filing appeals to the Board has dropped drastically. This is attributed to the fact that members of the Board and the Office of the Inspector General are communicating with California's veterans. If a complaint is filed, calls are made or letters are sent to the veteran until all of the matters are resolved and or understood.

The current Board has taken a very firm stand and is deeply concerned about the following issues: homeless veterans, Alzheimer / Dementia treatment facilities within our veterans homes, and the Life and Disability Insurance program in the Cal Vet Home Loan program. Additional attention is given to veteran's rights in the College Fee Waiver program for their children, lower interest rates for Home Loans and the planning for future Veterans Homes in California.

The Board was very pleased with the legislative bills which have been passed in the past year. The Board has voted on and supported over 50 legislative bills that benefit our veterans. (See chart on legislative actions.) The Board opposed two legislative bills; one was withdrawn and the other was amended, and then supported by the Board.

During this report period, each Board Member has made many efforts to visit each of the California Veterans Homes. Additionally, the Board holds meetings at each of the Homes. During each of their visits the Board Members dined and informally visited with the veteran residents, listening to the concerns of each.

## Budget Expenditure Report

### July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>ALLOCATION</u>	<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>
Personal Services	118,600	98,505	20,095
General Expenses	2,824	6,700	-3,876
Printing	1,700	700	1,000
Communications	1,100	1,150	-50
Postage	3,400	7,500	-4,100
Travel	39,550	35,957	3,593
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$167,174</b>	<b>\$150,512</b>	<b>\$16,662</b>

#### NOTES:

- Expenditures for FY 2002 are 90% of allocation.
- During eight months of this FY the Board had a full membership of seven; during the remaining year less than seven members were present.
- In accordance with SB 164 (8/2001) the Board hired a full time Executive Officer. That salary is included, for the first time, in the Board Expenses.
- In accordance with Governor Davis' Executive Order to reduce spending, the Board did not hold meetings in January and June 2002.
- Computations are rounded to nearest dollar.

## Recognition Plaques and Certificates Presented July 2001 – June 2002

<b>Presented To</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Presented By</b>
Dennis Weber	State Commander DAV	July 2001	John Fitzke
Dennis O'Dell	State Commander AMVETS	July 2001	John Fitzke
Tony M. Montoya	WW II POW	November 2001	John Fitzke
Commander	USMC Fleet Medical Facility	November 2001	Dr. Ed Feldman
Sherry McLaughlin	National President The American Legion Auxiliary	February 2002	George Sinopoli
James Goldsmith	Commander-in-Chief National VFW	February 2002	John Fitzke
George Steese Jr.	National Cdr DAV	March 2002	George Sinopoli
John Fitzke	Former CVB Member	March 2002	George Sinopoli
Kitty Rollins	Former Executive Officer CVB	April 2002	George Sinopoli
Anne Wright	Temp. Executive Officer CVB	April 2002	George Sinopoli
Pedro Carrillo	Former CVB Member	April 2002	George Sinopoli
George Jeffers	Cal Vet Supporter	June 2002	John Fitzke
Leo Burke	Gov. Commission on Vet. Homes	June 2002	George Sinopoli
Marcella McCormack	Director Cal Vet Home-Yountville	June 2002	George Sinopoli Larry Lattman
Ron Harris	State Cdr. American Legion	June 2002	George Sinopoli
Rocky Hockenhull	State Cdr. VFW	June 2002	George Sinopoli
Gary Crossland	State Cdr DAV	June 2002	George Sinopoli
George Steese Jr.	National Cdr DAV	June 2002	George Sinopoli
Donald McDonald	State Cdr. AMVETS	June 2002	Larry Lattman
Ralph Leventhal	State Cdr Jewish War Veterans	June 2002	Dr. Ed Feldman



## Goals and Objectives for Fiscal Year 2003

The California Veterans Board will set policy for the California Department of Veterans Affairs that will be both cost effective and valuable to the state's approximate 2.6 million veterans. While doing this task, the Board will ensure that the Department's expenditures are cost-effective by continuing to evaluate, approve major expenditures, and improve operational procedures.

The Board will seek more functional methods to adjudicate veterans' appeals against the state by better utilizing the Board's legal counsel and staff during research. The request for independent counsel will continue through the Attorney General's Office.

The Board will work toward a fiscal climate for the Department that will permit the continuation of lowering Cal Vet loan interest rates, improved management of billing cycles and increased reimbursements of charges at the California Veterans Homes.

The Board will continue to work with the Department as partners toward the simplification and streamlining of procedures and programs. This especially applies to the Farm and Home programs with their related insurance plans, and the fiscal management of the California Veterans Homes.

The Board will work in partnership with the Department to evaluate the Alzheimer and Dementia study, toward the implementation of more beneficial veterans home programs with cost-effective funding.

The Board will continue to support the state's many veterans services programs while working to provide the California County Veterans Services Officers with proper tools and funding to execute their assigned missions.

The Board will work toward enhancing their relationship with the state's veteran population and continue to interface with the state's many veterans' organizations.

The Board will continue to provide board oversight on new veterans home projects.

The Board will continue an awards program by recognizing those veterans and organizations deserving such recognition.

The Board will respond to the principles of governance by involvement in the Department's policy matters rather than the Department's operations.

The Board will continue to develop open communication with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Governor's Office, the Veterans Committees in the Senate and Assembly, and the veterans of California.

**CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD  
MEMBERS SERVING VETERANS TODAY**

**Chairperson George Sinopoli (Fresno), Vice Chairperson Edward Feldman (Westlake Village), Members, Jerry Basconcillo (Delano), Leo Burke (Stockton), Judy Gaze (San Diego), and Larry Lattman (California Veterans Home in Yountville).**

**Report Information available through Executive Officer Earl Steck, Office Phone Number 916-653-2041, Fax 916-653-1400, Web Site, [www.cdva.ca.gov/board](http://www.cdva.ca.gov/board), E-mail, "earl.steck@cdva.ca.gov"**

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